

Amendments to the Drawings

The attached Replacement Sheet of drawings includes changes to FIG. 7. This sheet, which includes FIGS. 6 and 7, replaces the original sheet including FIGS. 6 and 7. In FIG. 7, a legend "PRIOR ART" has been added.

Attachments: Replacement Sheet (FIGS. 6 and 7)

Annotated Drawing Sheet (FIGS. 6 and 7).

REMARKS

Drawings have been amended. Claims 1-3 and 5 have been amended. Although no fees are believed to be required, authorization is granted to charge our deposit account no. 03-3415 for any fees necessary for entry of this Amendment.

The Examiner has objected to applicant's FIG. 7 and required FIG. 7 to be designated by a legend such as -Prior Art - because only that which is old is illustrated. Applicant has amended applicant's FIG. 7, as shown in the Replacement Drawing and the Annotated Drawing Showing Changes, to include a legend "PRIOR ART," as suggested by the Examiner. The Examiner's objection is therefore obviated.

The Examiner has rejected applicant's claim 1 under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by the Takahashi (U.S. Pat. No. 6,973,265) patent. The Examiner has also rejected applicant's claims 2-9 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Takahashi patent in view of the Ohkado (U.S. Pat. No. 6,791,672) patent. Applicant has amended applicant's independent claims 1 and 2, and with respect to these claims, as amended, and their respective dependent claims, the Examiner's rejection is respectfully traversed. Applicant further submits that applicant's independent claim 6, and its dependent claims, are patentable over the cited art of record.

Applicant's amended independent claim 1 recites a distance and photometry sensor device, comprising first and second sensors arranged apart from each other in a first direction for receiving lights from the outside, a third sensor arranged between the first and second sensors and adapted to receive the light from the outside; and a signal processing unit including circuit portions for processing signals from the first and second sensors, wherein the third sensor is arranged so as to be deviated from each of the first and second sensors in a second direction different to the first direction, and the circuit portions constituting the signal

processing unit are arranged in the second direction with respect to the first and second sensors. Applicant's independent claim 2 has been similarly amended, and has been further amended to recite that the first and second sensors sense a defocus condition and the third sensor senses a light intensity.

Applicant's claim 6 recites a distance measurement and photometry sensor device, comprising first and second sensors arranged on the same semiconductor chip apart from each other by a predetermined base length for receiving lights from a subject, a photometry sensor arranged between the first and second sensors on the semiconductor chip for receiving the light from the subject and first, second, and third optical units for focusing or condensing the lights from the subject on the first and second sensors and the photometry sensor, respectively, wherein the pair of first and second sensors, and the photometry sensor are arranged so as to be offset in a direction perpendicular to a base length direction by a predetermined distance, and optical axes of the optical units correspond to the distance at which the first and second sensors, and the photometry sensor are offset.

The constructions recited in applicant's amended independent claims 1 and 2 and in applicant's independent claim 6 are not taught or suggested by the cited art of record. In particular, the Examiner has argued that the Takahashi patent shows a distance measurement and a photometry sensor in Fig. 1 including first and second sensors 101, 102, a photometry sensor 103, and a signal processing unit including circuit portions 104-16, in which the photometry sensor is arranged in a deviated manner from the first and second sensors.

Applicants have reviewed the cited Takahashi and Ohkado patents, and believe that neither the Takahashi patent nor the Ohkado patent teach or suggest the third sensor being arranged so as to be deviated from each of the first and second sensors in a second direction different from the first direction. Specifically, the Takahashi patent discloses a

photometry/ranging solid image pickup device which includes two AF sensor blocks (100 and 101), each having seven AF linear sensor circuits represented by 1A-7A and 1B-7B, respectively, and a photometry sensor (103) which includes a plurality of spot photometry photodiodes (S1-S7). FIG. 1; Col. 3, lines 7-20. Each of the AF linear sensor circuits 1A-7A and 1B-7B includes a sensor for receiving lights from the outside, i.e. a photodiode array, when ranging is performed. FIG. 1; Col. 3, lines 41-50. As shown in FIG. 7 of Takahashi, the position of these photodiode arrays of the AF linear sensor circuits, which form a sensor ranging region, is in complete correspondence with the position of the spot photometry region (S1-S7) of the photometry sensor, such that the photodiode arrays are coaxial with the spot photometry diodes (S1-S7) and with the photometry sensor (103). Col. 5, lines 50-55.

Thus, in the Takahashi patent, the positions of the first and second sensors, i.e. the photodiode arrays of circuits 1A-7A and 1B-7B, are aligned with, and completely correspond to, the position of the third sensor, i.e. spot photodiode array S1-S7, in the second direction which is different from the first direction (direction along the base line length D). FIG. 1 of Takahashi, cited by the Examiner, only shows the AF linear sensor circuits (102) being offset with respect to the photometry sensor in a direction perpendicular to the first direction (direction along the base line length D), and this, in turn, results in the photodiode array sensors being aligned with the photometry sensor.

Therefore, there is no teaching or suggestion in FIG. 1, or anywhere else in the Takahashi patent, of the positions of first and second sensors, i.e. the photodiode arrays of circuits 1A-7A and 1B-7B, being deviated or offset from the position of the third sensor, i.e. photometry sensor, in the second direction different from the first direction, as recited in applicant's amended independent claims 1 and 2. Likewise, there is nothing taught or suggested in Takahashi of the first and second sensors and the photometry sensor being arranged so as to

be offset in a direction perpendicular to the base length direction by a predetermined distance,
as recited in applicant's independent claim 6.

Moreover, the Ohkado patent fails to teach or suggestion these features. As in the Takahashi patent, the first and second sensors in the Ohkado patent, i.e. range finding sensors 103a and 103b, are coaxial with the photometry sensor, i.e., photometric sensor 103c, in the direction along the base line length. See, FIGS. 2B, 2C, 3B and 5B. Therefore, there is no teaching or suggestion in the Ohkado patent of the third sensor being arranged so as to be deviated from each of the first and second sensor in the second direction different from the first direction, or of the first and second sensors, and the photometry sensor being arranged so as to be offset in a direction perpendicular to a base length direction by a predetermined distance.

Applicant's amended independent claims 1 and 2, and applicant's independent claim 6, each of which recite one or more of the above features, and their respective dependent claims, thus patentably distinguish over the Takahashi patent and over the Ohkado patent, taken alone or in combination.

In view of the above, it is submitted that applicant's claims patentably distinguish over the cited art of record. Accordingly, reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that an interview would expedite consideration of this Amendment or of the application, a request is made that the Examiner telephone applicant's counsel at (212) 790-9286.

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Respectfully submitted,



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Annotated Drawing Showing Changes
 Sheet 1 of 1
 Appln. No. 10/762,633

FIG. 6

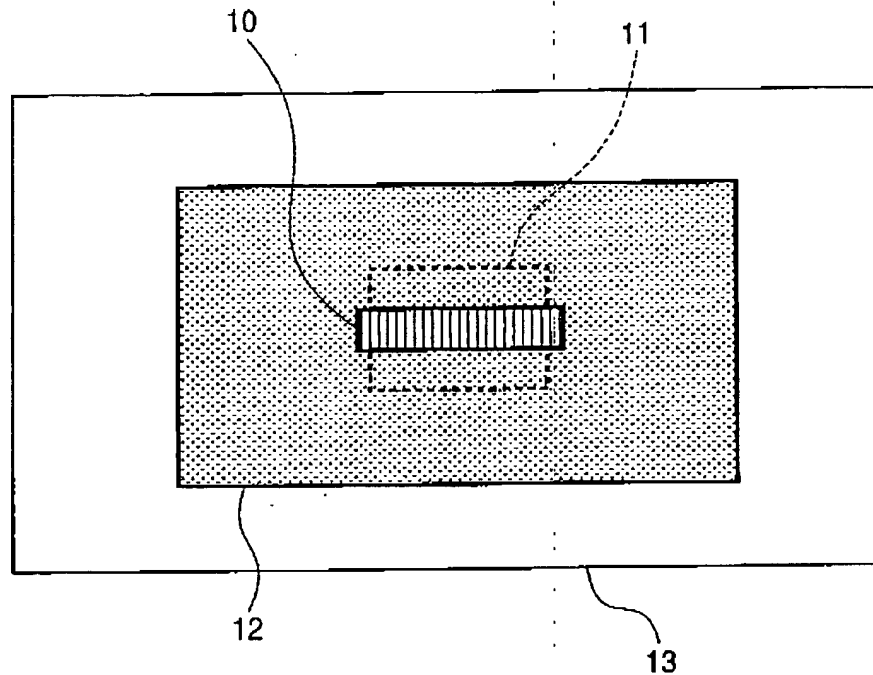


FIG. 7 (PRIOR ART)

